

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

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ACDA-10 AGR-10 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIEP-02

COME-00 DLOS-05 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FMC-02

INT-05 IO-10 JUSE-00 NSF-02 OES-05 OMB-01 EUR-12 /146 W

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FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1024

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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UNCLAS HALIFAX 150

EO 11652 NA

TAGS EFIS CA

SUBJ FISHERIES MINISTER ARGUES IN FAVOR OF CATCH REDUCTION

REF: CONGEN TEL 142, MAY 6, 1975

1. DURING COURSE OF AN INTERVIEW ON MAY 9 IN HALIFAX, FEDERAL FISHERIES MINISTER ROMEO LE BLANC IS REPORTED AS STATING THAT A SERIOUS REDUCTION IN THE CATCHES OF FOREIGN FISHING FLEETS IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC WOULD BRING ABOUT A PARTIAL EASING IN THE CRISIS FACING CANADA'S FISHING INDUSTRY. (THE MINISTER WAS PRE-UMABLY REFERRING TO THE NORTH WEST ATLANTIC OFF CANADA'S EAST COAST. HE SAID CANADA HAS THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE NEEDED TO ARGUE FOR A 40 PERCENT REDUCTION IN THE FOREIGN FISH CATCH. CANADIAN ARGUMENTS WILL BE PLACED BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES (ICNAF) NEXT MONTH IN SCOTLAND.

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WM LE BLANC SAID THAT ALTHOUGH ARGUING FOR A REDUCTION IN THE FOREIGN FISH CATCH, CANADA WOULD ASK THAT CANADA BE EXEMPTED. AT PRESENT HE SAID CATCHES OF CANADIAN FISHERMEN ARE DOWN AND THE FISHERY IS IN VERY BAD SHAPE.

3. ALTHOUGH HE HAS NOT SEEN THE FINISHED NEGOTIATING TEXTS OF RECENT LAW OF SEA CONFERENCE IN GENEVA, LE BLANC SAID FROM LIMITED INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO HIM, THEY SEEM TO BE GOOD NEWS FOR CANADA. OFFICIAL COMMENT WILL BE WITHHELD UNTIL CAREFUL STUDY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ALL ASPECTS OF THE CONFERENCE. LE BLANC SAID THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF A 200 MILE LIMIT REMAINS AN OPTION FOR CANADA BUT ADMITTED THAT UNILATERAL ACTION WOULD NOT BE AN EASY TASK IN VIEW OF PROBLEMS OF SURVEILLANCE.

4. LE BLANC SAID THAT CANADA IS NOT USING THREAT OF UNILATERAL ACTION ON THE 200 MILE MANAGEMENT ZONE TO OBTAIN ICNAF AGREEMENT ON A 40 PERCENT REDUCTION IN FOREIGN CATCHES. EVEN IF THERE HAD BEEN NO LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE, CANADA WOULD HAVE BEEN PUSHING FOR REDUCTION IN CATCHES.

5. LE BLANC SAID THAT CANADIAN OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN TALKING WITH ICNAF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE HOPE OF CONVINCING THEM OF NEED FOR A CATCH REDUCTION. HE SAID THAT MATTER WILL BE DISCUSSED AT ICNAF SCIENTIFIC DISCUSSIONS NEXT MONTH BUT ANY AGREEMENT ON CANADA'S REQUEST WILL COME LATER IN THE YEAR.

6. LE BLANC SAID THAT IF 200 MILE MANAGEMENT ZONE OBTAINED WOULD NOT BE AN AUTOMATIC CURE-ALL FOR CANADA'S FISHING INDUSTRY AS THERE WOULD BE A TIME LAG BEFORE STOCKS ARE REPLENISHED AND FISHING FLEETS REVITALIZED. MANBEY

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